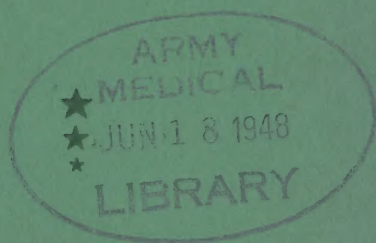


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SCHOOLS AND CLASSES
— *for* —
EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

THE CHILD WITH IMPAIRED VISION



LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Publication No. 391
1943

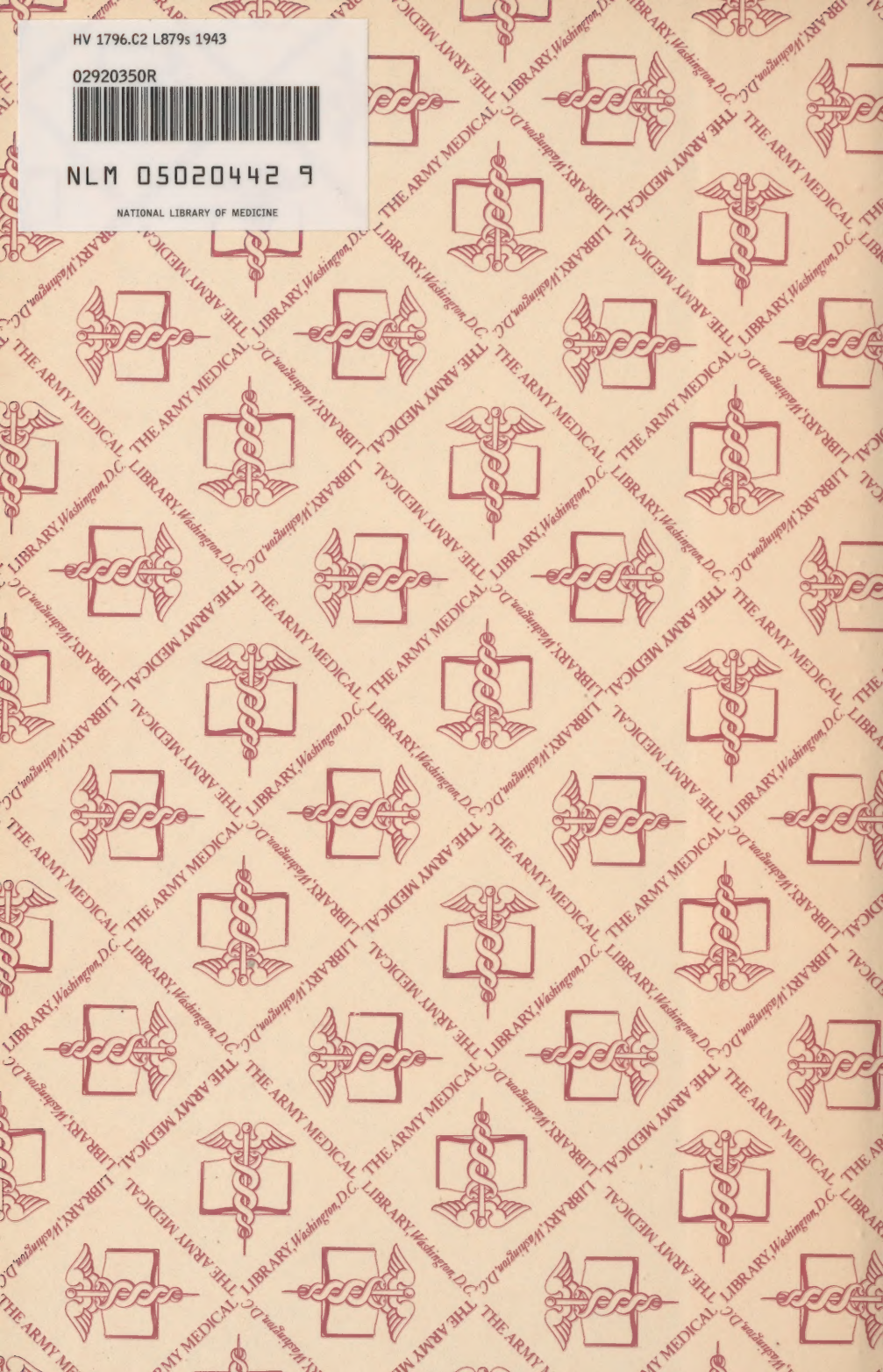
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SCHOOLS AND CLASSES

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EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The Child With Impaired Vision

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS District

School Publication No. 391

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FOREWORD

Los Angeles was among the first few cities of our nation to recognize the need for the special public school education of her blind and partially seeing children. The first special class for the blind began January 1, 1917, under the supervision of Miss Frances Blend, who has continued in charge of the education of the blind children enrolled in the Los Angeles Day Elementary and High School for the Blind and Partially Seeing since that date. The work was extended in 1925 to meet the needs of partially seeing children by placing them in "Sight-Saving" Classes in elementary, junior and senior high schools. Specially trained teachers having excellent qualifications for this work have been placed in charge of the students. Los Angeles transports her blind children by bus and the partially seeing by street car or bus as circumstances warrant. We are assured that the more we can help these children the more they will be able to serve our community. This publication is designed to give desired information to parents, educators and others interested in the welfare of the blind and partially seeing.

Frances Blend states, "The untrained, blind child is imprisoned by the walls of physical darkness. As educators, we must put within his grasp the keys which will enable him to unlock the doors to freedom. To awaken and train his dormant abilities, to develop resources within himself, to stimulate the will to conquer,—these are the keys by which the blind child may come forth from the dark night of blindness into the bright day of mental and spiritual emancipation."

VIERLING KERSEY,
Superintendent of Schools



INTRODUCTION

Susan Miller Dorsey, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of the Los Angeles Schools from 1913 to 1929, a nationally honored educator, stated in one of her public addresses, "I believe we entirely underrate the achievements of our American civilization. People have grown to be more understanding of their obligations, more wholesome and genuinely humane. This is proved by their relief work and by their provisions for the care and education of the handicapped child. America has shown a steady growth of a social conscience. It may be doubted whether in all time there has been a more spontaneous outburst of a passion for humanity than in America in these recent years. That we have travelled a long way toward social justice can be seen when we compare the fate of the eighteenth century children with the almost tender consideration, shown today in many American schools and communities, for the handicapped child. The spirits of men have grown to a nobler understanding of their responsibility to all children and especially to the handicapped. A more humane and enlightened public opinion has brought about necessary legislation. Great teachers have studied and experimented to discover the most effective techniques. The heart of America is, after all, right. It still has dreams of a better world for all. She has travelled with astounding speed in the relief of destitution and in service to the handicapped child. Our America has just started on a long, triumphant course toward a fuller life for all."

This publication endeavors to set forth what our nation and our own community are doing for children handicapped by impaired vision. We hope to acquaint our community with what

is being done and to awaken them to study, to experiment, to enact laws which will still further ameliorate the condition of the handicapped, will better protect all children and will finally bring about the abolishment of the causes for physical handicaps.

JESSIE A. TRITT

Head Supervisor

Education of Exceptional Children

FRANCES BLEND

Principal

School for Blind and Sight Saving
Los Angeles

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DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

If all men are equal, they are entitled to an equal opportunity for education. Some children require special help because of handicaps. True justice grants this special help in order that the child may have his right to an education. Each child must be given the opportunity to develop the talents he possesses, achieve his best and make his greatest contribution to our democratic society.

Each child has a right to an education which supplies to him as normal and as satisfying a childhood as possible. He has a right to a preparation for adult life which allows him to take his place in the social and economic world as fully as his capabilities will permit. The public money is well spent if a wholesome personality is developed—one who can help himself and his society. The handicapped child should be made to feel that society expects him to fit himself for life's responsibilities just as it expects the normal child to do.

It is sound public policy and not charity to provide special treatment and training for all types of exceptional children. Every child should receive the type of education best fitted to his intellectual and physical needs. It is unquestionably better public policy to spend more money today in helping the handicapped child to help himself than it is to spend many times as much tomorrow in supporting him at public expense or possibly having him become a menace to society. We must help handicapped children to feel that they have responsibilities, they have their place in society, that society needs them and appreciates their contribution to the public welfare and happiness. We must help them to be self-respecting, confident, worthy citizens. We must help them develop their major possibilities.

Definitions—The Blind and the Partially Seeing

Rudolf Pintner states that "the blind" refers to those whose vision is of no practical value to them for purposes of education or in the general business of living. These range from total blindness to those who have considerable light perception. It is usual to consider children with less than 20/200 as educationally blind. Those from 20/200 up to 20/70 are considered partially sighted, needing sight saving methods, and those above 20/70 are considered capable of attending regular school.

How Many Children Have Defective Vision?

The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection (1930) estimated that there are about 15,000 blind and 50,000 partially sighted children of school age in the United States. They estimated that 80% of the nation's children had normal vision, 19.75% had correctible eye defects, .2% were partially sighted (1 in 500) and .05% were blind (1 in 2,000).

The United States report of 1940 indicates that 43 states provide for the education of blind or partially seeing children. In these states there are 5,870 blind children in state residential schools. Fifteen cities have day schools and classes for the blind enrolling 367 blind children. There are 181 cities in the United States providing special education for 8,508 partially seeing children. The total of these three types is 14,745 children enrolled.

These sixteen states have residential schools but do not indicate any special day school classes: Alabama, 230; Arizona, 53; Arkansas, 97; Florida, 106; Idaho, 26; Mississippi, 80; Montana, 25; Nebraska, 53; New Mexico, 85; North Carolina, 288; North Dakota, 36; Oklahoma, 151; South Carolina, 111; South Dakota, 40; Utah, 30; West Virginia, 131—Total 1,542.

Twenty-seven states have special public schools and classes for blind and partially seeing children.

States	Residential Schools	Day Schools		Total
		Blind	Partially Seeing	
California.....	122	68	459	649
Colorado.....	54		15	69
Connecticut.....	63		96	159
Georgia.....	128	8	11	147
Illinois.....	236		949	1,185
Indiana.....	137		81	218
Iowa.....	175		17	192
Kansas.....	95		18	113
Kentucky.....	184		97	281
Louisiana.....	128	6	56	190
Maine.....			12	12
Maryland.....	106		140	246
Massachusetts.....	260		451	711
Michigan.....	196	103	861	1,160
Minnesota.....	125		351	476
Missouri.....	96		93	189
New Jersey.....		56	189	245
New York.....	420	116	390	2,926
Ohio.....	247		1,217	1,464
Oregon.....	96		23	119
Pennsylvania.....	449		397	846
Rhode Island.....			46	46
Tennessee.....	198	10	47	255
Texas.....	394		7	401
Virginia.....	166		73	239
Washington.....	86		167	253
Wisconsin.....	167		156	323
Washington, D. C.....			89	89
<hr/>				
Enrolled in foregoing				
16 states.....	1,542			
Totals.....	5,870	*367	8,508	14,745

*Some cities did not segregate the blind from the partially seeing.

California in 1940 reported 649 blind and partially seeing children, 527 were enrolled in public schools and 122 in the State Residential School for the Blind. These cities had children with defective vision enrolled in special classes: Berkeley 10, Chino 2, Long Beach 43, Los Angeles 300, Pasadena 45, San Diego 10, San Francisco 109, San Leandro 3, Santa Ana 4, Santa Barbara 1.



Los Angeles in 1940 reported 65 blind children (42 elementary and 23 secondary) and 235 partially seeing (143 elementary and 92 secondary) a total of 300. In the year 1942-1943 there were 70 blind and 241 partially seeing enrolled in the day school for the blind and partially seeing.

1. Causes of Vision Impairment

A table of the causes of blindness among 105 students at the California School for the Blind indicated:

	BLIND			PARTIALLY BLIND			Grand
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Total
Congenital	9	11	20	14	13	27	47
Accident before 5 years of age....	1	....	1	1	2	3	4
Accident after " " " "	10	....	10	2	1	3	13
Disease before " " " "	5	2	7	2	3	5	12
Disease after " " " "	2	1	3	3	1	4	7
Cataract	1	2	3	7	8	15	18
Albinism .....	....	....	....	1	3	4	4
Totals (Boys)	28	....	28	30	....	30	58
(Girls) .....	....	16	16	....	31	31	47
			44			61	105

Fireworks have exacted a heavy toll in eye injuries. Thirteen states have laws concerning their sale.

"Accidents," said Dr. Edward Jackson of Denver, Colorado, "are responsible for sixteen percent of the cases of complete blindness."

Disease is the cause of the majority of cases of defective vision. The use of the eyes for reading too soon after illness is harmful. Reading in bed should be forbidden because of the strain on the eyes. Working in poor light or in glaring light, overstraining the eyes in reading fine print or in doing fine handwork has caused much eye injury.

Parents have their part to play in caring for the vision of our school children. The hazards of Fourth of July accidents should not be forgotten. Sore eyes should never be neglected, as serious conditions begin with slight inflammation. Parents should protect their children's eyes by avoiding long moving

picture programs. Excessive reading of books should be avoided by nearsighted children, as this condition is aggravated by too much close use.

Ideas that have proven incorrect: parents often believe or have been told that their child will outgrow strabismus (cross-eyes). As the child ceases to use the deviating eye its vision decreases markedly. The eyes must be straightened to save the sight of the deviating eye. In the early stages straightening can sometimes be done by glasses and training. In the later stages an operation may be needed.

Crossed eyes are a fairly common defect of school children. Frequently a mother will claim that her child became crosseyed because of a fall, or illness, or habit, usually at about three years of age. This condition, however, is usually due to the fact that one eye has very poor vision or there may be an unequal pull of the eye muscles. If the eyes are not straightened after a due trial with glasses and training, they should be corrected by operation. It is not wise to delay as the child may suffer loss of vision in one eye and develop subconscious sensitiveness because of his appearance.

As we obtain at least 60% of our knowledge through our vision, the importance of good sight is evident. It is, indeed, cruel to insist that a child, even in kindergarten, do his work if he cannot see well and with comfort. It is ridiculous to expect a child to be a good student if he cannot see the writing on the blackboard or if he must strain to read his books, with resultant headaches, sties and inflamed eyes. All too frequently, it is found that the backward child has been struggling along with an unsuspected visual defect.

Prevention

It is authoritatively stated that three out of four cases of blindness could have been prevented by the following present known means: skilled medical or surgical treatment, control of infectious diseases, greater attention to general health, better nutrition, sanitation, safety measures against hazards, better light-

ing in homes, schools, business buildings and factories, and periodic examination of the eyes of school children.

Most organizations concerned with the welfare of the blind make prevention one of their outstanding functions. Guard well the eyes you have, knowing that you cannot renew or replace them. Make them last their full time of usefulness. Children must be taught the dangers of eye strain, poor light, bad print, dirty hands, dirty towels, or rough usage of their eyes.

Many a case of poor eyesight in maturity could have been prevented by the use of glasses in school days. Children should read by a good light or not at all. They must not be allowed to read by the fading light of evening. Rubbing the eyes with dirty hands or dirty towels is a frequent cause of eye trouble. Children should keep their hands away from their faces. They must guard their priceless, irreplaceable treasure of eyesight.

Common remedies may do more harm than good. The use of tea leaves, flax seed in the eye and flaxseed poultices for inflamed eyes should be discouraged. There may be a deeper lying condition which needs scientific care. The use of a family eyecup or daily bathing the eyes with some lotion may do much harm. The eyes are continually irrigated by the tears and such methods are not required. Common drugs, boric acid, argyrol, ointments, ice packs and hot compresses should be used only by orders from your physician.

It would be of immense benefit if everyone's eyes were examined at stated periods. It is advocated that examinations at these four ages would be a boon to sight conservation: age of four, age of fourteen, age around twenty-four when breadwinning activities begin, and age of forty-five. All of these periods are special ages of growth and change.

Dr. Willis Morton Gardner, Chief Oculist and Otologist of the Los Angeles City Schools, in regard to the vision of school children says: "The care of children's eyes begins at birth with the instillation of a mild antiseptic which prevents the disease known as babies' sore eyes (*ophthalmia neonatorum*.) The Na-



tional Society for the Prevention of Blindness has performed a great service in furthering this treatment throughout the United States. Unfortunately, it is not compulsory in California.

"In 1908, 26.5% of the children entering schools for the blind in the United States had lost their eyesight because of babies' sore eyes. By 1934 the number had been reduced to 6.7%—a reduction of 75% in 26 years, which was largely due to the use of this harmless routine method of treating children's eyes at birth."

The pre-natal treatment of expectant mothers is now routine practice in all good medical centers. It controls the congenital effects of syphilis in the newborn.

Total war effort needs all eyes. To paraphrase the current slogans, we must "keep 'em seeing." It does not require war to make us conscious of the importance of good eyesight, but war emphasizes that importance. Blindness is at all times both a hardship to the individual and a handicap to society. In war defective vision impairs military and industrial effort, while the circumstances from which it may occur are multiplied.

There are uncounted thousands of persons with defective vision whose sight could have been conserved if they had received adequate eye care in time. In addition, there are approximately 200,000 men, women and children in the United States who have lost their sight completely through disease or injury. The tragedy of such loss, with its attendant suffering, lies in the fact that most of this blindness would not have occurred if proper precautions had been taken at the right time.

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness is dedicated to the task of safeguarding eyes in every walk of life. We shall never know how many Americans can see today because of its varied activities, but we have evidence of definite accomplishments in the great reduction of blindness from particular causes on which the Society has concentrated its program of public education. Much more remains to be done, however, and we need the continued support of everyone whose interest can be enlisted in this movement.

Discovering Visual Difficulties Among School Children

Teachers and mothers should observe the behavior of school children. The child may have a visual difficulty who frequently shows some of these tendencies. He should have his vision tested.

1. Attempts to brush away blur
2. Blinks continually when reading
3. Cries frequently
4. Has frequent fits of temper
5. Holds the book far away from face when reading
6. Holds his face close to the page when reading
7. Holds his body tense when looking at distant objects
8. Inattentive in reading lesson
9. Inattentive in wall chart, map, or blackboard lesson
10. Inattentive during class discussion of field trip
11. Irritable over work
12. Reads but a brief period without stopping
13. Reads when he should be at play
14. Rubs his eyes frequently
15. Screws up his face when reading
16. Screws up his face when looking at distant objects
17. Shuts or covers one eye when reading
18. Thrusts his head forward to see distant objects
19. Tilts his head to one side when reading
20. Poor alignment in penmanship
21. Reversal tendencies in reading
22. Tends to look cross-eyed when reading
23. When reading, tends to make frequent changes in distance at which he holds his book
24. When reading, tends to lose the place on the page
25. Confusions in reading and spelling: o's and a's; e's and c's; n's and m's; h's, n's and r's; f's and t's
26. Apparent guesses from a quick recognition of parts of the word in easy reading material

Educational Needs of the Child With Defective Vision

First we must find the child with defective vision. Then we must improve his vision as much as possible by suitable glasses, by school room and home lighting, good clear print, by eye training, eye resting and by other ways of improving his eye health. We must work on his general health by proper nutrition, rest, exercise, and other health procedures. We should improve his mental and emotional health also by surrounding him with a wholesome, healthful environment both at home and at school, making him feel he is loved, appreciated and that he has his responsibility to contribute to the happiness and welfare of the group.

Schools must meet the needs of vision defective children by clear type and Braille books, by Braille equipment, by proper lighting and by providing materials and equipment for handicraft, music, games and other worthwhile activities, and by special transportation.

California State Laws Concerning the Visually Handicapped

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL LAWS allow each district to test the sight and hearing of each pupil enrolled, (1.120a). Any child who is blind or deaf or partially blind or deaf may attend special classes (1.146). School districts may make special provision for the education of physically handicapped minors (3.605). They may provide individual counseling and guidance in social and vocational matters and prepare such minors for employment (3.609), cooperate in placement (3.610), transport them (3.611). Four hours of actual attendance shall count as one day of attendance (3.618). The total average daily attendance and costs shall be reported on forms provided (3.620). For pupils having defective vision, sight-saving classes may be organized (3.625). Excess costs up to \$200 per child are paid from State School Fund and State General Fund (4.783 and 4.795).



A Reader to assist a blind college student may be paid as much as \$300 per annum (Act 7490).

California pays pensions to dependent blind adults.

Extract from The State Law—Passed in 1935.

"Any driver of a vehicle who approaches or comes in contact with a person wholly or partially blind, carrying a cane or walking stick white in color, or white tipped with red, shall immediately come to a full stop and take such precautions before proceeding as may be necessary to avoid accident or injury to the person wholly or partially blind." Those failing to do so will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

California maintains a State School for the Blind. This is located at Berkeley, California. R. S. French is Superintendent, and also is Chief of the State Bureau for the Education of the Blind.

EDUCATION OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED IN THE LOS ANGELES CITY SCHOOLS

Educationally Blind

A person who cannot be educated by means of print is considered educationally blind, although he may perceive light and dark, large objects, etc.

The State of California makes provision for blind children in two types of school: one the California State School for the Blind at Berkeley and the other in public school classes for both the blind and for those with seriously defective vision. There is close cooperation between the State School at Berkeley and the public school classes in Los Angeles—each having its particular advantages and disadvantages but each always striving to cooperate with and supplement the other.

The first day class for blind children in Los Angeles, was initiated with eight pupils January 1, 1917 at the old Jefferson Street School. From this small beginning, the Los Angeles City

School District now has both elementary and secondary classes for its blind students. By special arrangements with outlying school districts, blind pupils in surrounding areas are accommodated. All blind children are transported to and from these classes by school buses.

It is the aim of the department to follow the regular course of study, making as few substitutions as possible.

Training for the most normal living is begun at once. This starts with individual independence as soon as possible. Reading and writing of Braille, as a tool, must be mastered on the same basis that a seeing child learns to read and write. Through the mastery of Braille, the world of books is opened to the blind child. In addition to the regular academic work, piano lessons are given to all. To those who show aptitude along this line, the instruction is continued throughout their school life. However, a complete and thorough course in musical appreciation is provided for all.

Typing, special handicrafts, corrective physical education and pre-vocational guidance form essential parts of the program.

As the work is largely individual, classes are kept small, ranging from eight to ten. The high school pupils take all their subjects in the regular classes, after having received special help in the preparation of their lessons from the special teachers who are in charge of their home rooms. This plan affords an opportunity for the blind pupils to work under normal conditions and to make desirable contacts with those who are not handicapped.

The Federal Government makes it possible for all classes for the blind to receive Braille books, relief maps, slates for writing Braille, Talking Book records and other types of special equipment and supplies needed by these pupils. A definite sum, based on enrollment, is appropriated each year, from which the school district may requisition from the American Printing House for the Blind at Louisville, Kentucky.

As the readers and other textbooks supplied in this way do not cover all those required by the State of California, the teachers of these classes make much of their material on Braille machines—a

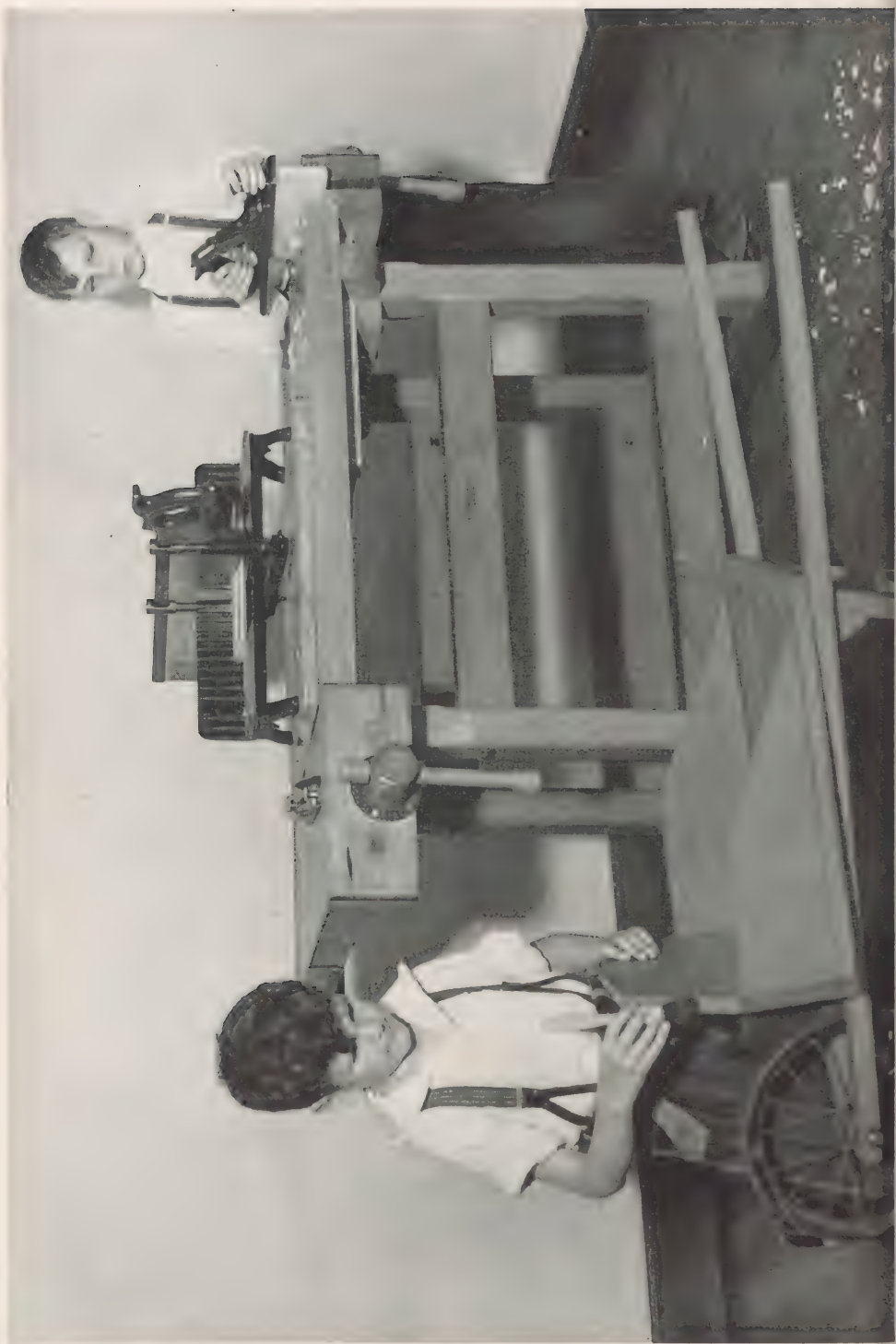
slow and tedious process. A large amount of supplementary material, including the Braille books from the American Printing House for the Blind, has been accumulated and forms a large library. With other types of specialized equipment, this helps to meet the needs of blind pupils.

Classes for elementary blind children are located at the Thirty-second Street School. In planning this building, special provision was made for blind children in the way of classrooms, work room, music room, library and a room provided with cots where small children may rest while waiting for the school buses. As a result of the improved facilities the educational work for these children has been made more effective.

Sight Saving Classes

This term is applied to classes for children with very defective vision—those for whom ordinary school equipment is inadequate. Physical vision may or may not, improve while within these classes. These are the Standards for Entering a Sight Saving Class (formulated by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness):

1. Children having visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after proper refraction. In addition, the following are recommended as potential candidates:
 - (a) Children in elementary school having four or more diopters of myopia.
 - (b) Inactive, subsiding (or regressive) cases, such as interstitial or phlyctenular keratitis, optic neuritis, trachoma, etc., in which some irritation may be present, provided the approval of the attending physician is given.
2. All cases must be considered individually.
3. Any child who, in the opinion of the ophthalmologist, might benefit by assignment to a sight saving class, subject to suggestion for treatment and training by such oculist, and the acceptance of the educational authorities having charge of such classes.



4. It is assumed that all the children assigned to sight saving classes have average normal mentality.

The problem of educating children, not totally blind but with vision too defective for them to be adjusted in regular classes, has been met by the organization of sight saving classes. Assignment to such classes must be made on the basis of the standards given above, but always on the basis of the applicant as an individual. During the regular eye examinations given each sight saving pupil throughout his stay in the special class, it will be determined whether he is to continue in sight saving, be transferred to a Braille class, or be returned to the regular class.

Convenience of transportation is a primary consideration in selecting a location for a sight saving class. As the Board of Education pays for the cost of transportation, buildings near the good bus lines and the street car lines having good transfer facilities are chosen. The special room should be large enough to permit the children to move about freely and have the long focal distance so necessary in resting the eyes. It must be equipped with movable furniture. In order that there may be a maximum of light with a minimum of glare, it must have correct lighting, both natural and artificial. This necessitates proper window space, approved window shades, special treatment of walls and ceilings, mat finish for all surfaces, and properly installed and adjusted artificial lights.

Among the special materials needed are Clear Type Books in 18 point and 24 point type, heavy pencils, speed ball pens, unglazed manila paper, special soft chalk in white and soft yellow, typewriters with large type, special maps and pictures.

The norm of enrollment in the Los Angeles City School Sight Saving Classes is fifteen (15); however the actual enrollment varies more or less according to local conditions. All sight saving pupils remain in their own classroom for all subjects requiring close eye work, where they may study under the best physical conditions. In order that they may live and develop under most normal conditions, they go to the regular classes for all oral recitations,

discussions, play, etc., and return to their home room for preparation and special help.

Los Angeles City School Classes for Blind and Sight Saving 1943-1944:

ELEMENTARY	JUNIOR HIGH	SENIOR HIGH
Blind	-----	John Francis
Thirty-second Street (5 classes)		Polytechnic High (2 classes)
Sight Saving		
1. Cabrillo Ave.	1. Central Jr.	1. Hollywood High
2. Florence Ave.	2. Edison Jr.	2. Los Angeles High
3. Gardner St.	3. LeConte Jr.	3. Manual Arts High
4. Hoover St.	4. Mt. Vernon Jr.	
5. Lorena St.	5. Muir Jr.	
6. Sixty-first St.		
7. Thirty-second St.		
8. Vermont Ave.		
9. Vine St.		
10. Westminster Ave.		

Learning to Read Braille

"How long does it take to learn Braille?" "That depends!", answer the blinded, "It depends upon intelligence, and study and other personal considerations." One's love of reading and the amount of time given to learning and practice have much to do with it.

Learning to read Braille is a most difficult and tedious task. It takes time to acquire skill and speed. This is because the muscles of the neck, hands, shoulders, arms, abdomen and back tire quickly due to tension of effort and to cramped, sustained position. There is a strain on the attention. The amount of reading matter that can be obtained through the area of the fingers is so small that the mind is prone to wander or forge ahead. The older the person is who is beginning learning to read Braille, the more difficult the process. The fingers lack sensitiveness and there is a slower re-

sponse between the nerve ends of the fingers and the brain center. Very few elderly persons ever master Braille and make it a tool whereby they read fluently and with ease so that reading is a real pleasure. Most elderly blind persons are taught the Moon Type first. Some few progress to Braille, when and if the sense of touch has been properly trained.

History of Education of the Blind and the Partially Seeing

The handicapped have problems that arise from their membership in a changing world and they have peculiar problems of their own. Their program for the future must rise from the trials, errors, victories of their past and present.

In primitive and ancient times the philosophy of the survival of the fittest was current. The handicapped did not survive except in a few cases. With Christianity came greater compassion for others: for the weak, the unfortunate, the poor, the maimed. Modern times have united compassion with science to relieve the condition of the handicapped.

Valentin Haüy—1745-1822—became a leader in the education of the blind of France and Europe. Louis XVI contributed to the school founded by Haüy. Haüy invented embossed printing for the use of the blind.

Louis Braille—1809-1852—Louis Braille was a French boy born January 4, 1809, near Paris. His father was a harness-maker and the boy, when about three years old, playing with an awl in his father's shop, destroyed one of his eyes and soon lost the sight of the other. He was bright, and after education at a school for the blind, became a teacher therein. He learned to play the organ. Later he became organist in several Paris churches. He devised a six dot system, an improvement on one made by Charles Barbier, having twelve dots, which was too large for quick reading. Braille used six dots with a possible sixty-three combinations, enough for all letters, figures, and punctuation. His method was perfected in 1834 but not adopted till two years after Braille's



death at the age of forty-three in 1852. Braille's name is a household word to blind people all over the globe because he helped them to read print. His system has displaced five other systems.

In 1868 Great Britain adopted his Braille system. It was first used in the United States in 1859 at the Missouri School for the Blind. It proved so successful that the New York Institute decided to use a similar plan called New York Point which they believed to be an improvement. Followers in America and England argued for two years over the respective merits of Braille and New York Point. Perkins Institution made its adaptation and called it American Braille. Finally a Uniform Type Committee was organized to decide which was the best method. Later a committee known as the American Braille Commission continued the effort. In 1932 Standard English Braille became the official system for general literature.

In 1837 Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, director of Perkins Institute, began the education of Laura Bridgman, (1829-1889) a seven year old child, who had become deaf and blind from scarlet fever at the age of two. His methods remain the standard ones. Upon articles in common use were fastened labels containing the name printed in raised letters. Laura soon distinguished the differences in the names. Then detached labels were given her to lay on the proper articles. Then she learned the letters separately. Laura became expert in reading and writing, arithmetic, algebra, geography, history. She was a fine needlewoman, could sew on the sewing machine and knit fine lace.

The New York Institute for the Education of the Blind was founded March 15, 1832. Samuel Wood, a Quaker, had aroused interest in the blind children of New York City. Up to 1939 this school had enrolled 3,152 blind pupils. One of its graduates was Fanny Crosby, one of the foremost hymn-writers of the past century. President Grover Cleveland was at one time an instructor there.

The American Printing House for the Blind was established in 1858. In 1876 the United States Congress granted it \$10,000 per year. By 1938 this was raised to \$125,000 annually.

William Moon (1818-1894) was an English philanthropist. In 1840 at the age of 22, he gave up his studies for the church because of total blindness. He started a school for blind children and invented a simpler system of embossed type for the use of the blind. It had only nine letters but by variation of position made up a complete alphabet. He also published embossed pictures and maps for the blind. He established loan libraries of his books.

Mrs. Winifred Hathaway in 1906 with Miss Edith Holt conducted a vision survey. The American Conservation of Vision Association was the result. This, in 1915, became "The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness." Mrs. Hathaway has achieved an international reputation through her many years of service in the campaign to save eyesight, especially for her work in promoting the establishment of sight-saving classes in which children with seriously defective vision receive a normal education with a minimum of eye strain. Largely through her personal inspiration and encouragement there were in 1940, 8,508 such children in special classes in public schools throughout the United States. She has probably brought the story of the need and the methods of safeguarding sight to a larger number of persons than any other person in America.

Winifred Hathaway states: Any work, medical or educational, with the partially seeing child presupposes the cooperation of the ophthalmologist; his diagnosis, his treatment, his advice and his recommendations are essential to the success of any undertaking. Sight-saving classes have been established in the United States for children whose vision in the better eye, after correction, falls between 20/70 and 20/200 and for those suffering from progressive eye difficulties. Of the thousands of partially seeing children in the United States only about one-eighth are being given educational opportunities suited to their needs.

Franz von Gaheis of Austria in 1802 was the first to recognize that partially seeing children are misfits in schools for the normally seeing and to suggest that steps be taken to provide suitable educational advantages for such children. However it was not until 1908, one hundred years later, that James Kerr and Bishop

Harman reemphasized the importance of this idea and established a school for myopic (nearsighted) children in England. Three years later, Redslob established at Strasbourg the first class for partially seeing children on the European continent.

Through the efforts of Edward E. Allen, superintendent of Perkins Institution for the Blind, the first sight-saving class in the United States was established in Boston in April, 1913. The same year a second class was opened in Cleveland under the direction of Robert B. Irwin. In his plan, the children did all their close eye work in the special classroom but entered into all other activities with their normally seeing companions in the regular grades. Most classes follow this Cleveland plan, as it prevents the development of a social handicap through segregation. Such classes are now accepted as a part of the educational system.

Sight-saving classes provide educational opportunities for children of low vision acuity. They prevent, through judicious use of the eyes, deterioration that may occur under unfavorable conditions in progressive eye affections. They offer educational facilities to children having noncommunicable eye diseases in a regressive stage. They assist children with muscle and fusion difficulties who would be handicapped in the ordinary class by fatigue, loss of time, or inability to see because of the necessity for covering one eye. They make the work of the regular classes more profitable to normally seeing children because of the special facilities for those who require more than their proportionate share of the teacher's time and attention.

The ophthalmologist sometimes has to decide whether the child of very low vision should work in the sight-saving class or in the Braille class or in the school for the blind. He also decides when the eye condition or readaptation of the child warrants the child's return to the regular grades.

Close cooperation is essential among ophthalmologists, school medical officers, educational authorities, and parents or guardians.

In the sight-saving class the child receives individual help from a teacher trained to understand the nature of his handicap so that she can adapt his work to his particular needs and also instruct him



how to safeguard his sight. The child uses books printed in large, clear type; maps without too much detail; pencils, chalk, paper, pens that will enable clear writing. He also rests his eyes by working with clay, plasticene, or by paper cutting, in order to carry out his creative ideas with a minimum of eye strain. He uses the large letter typewriter and learns the touch system. His teacher and normally seeing friends read to him. His room has excellent natural and artificial illumination, well controlled to avoid glare; walls, ceilings, woodwork prepared to avoid glare. He uses a hygienic seat and desk.

Provision for the welfare of young partially seeing children of pre-school age should be made. When children have received the benefit of a sight-saving class in the elementary school, the same benefit should be provided in high school and college. Otherwise they are discouraged and feel inadequate to compete with normal students.

It is hoped that through preventive measures the necessity for the special education of the blind and partially seeing will be greatly diminished.

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness estimates that one child out of every five-hundred belongs in a sight-saving class. The thirty largest cities in the United States in 1940 had a total of 5,856 blind and partially seeing children enrolled in special education classes in their public schools. New York had 1,977, Chicago 573, Philadelphia 305, Detroit 593, Los Angeles 300, and Cleveland had 359. These in order are our six largest cities.

Winifred Hathaway says concerning sight and light, "There is a common agreement that *sight* is the real lamp of learning since through this sense the brain receives most of its impressions. Every effort should be made to keep normal eyes normal and to give all possible assistance to those that are abnormal. Illuminating engineers, ophthalmologists, educators and others have been trying to determine the proper intensity of *light* for normal eyes to work. They recommend fifteen foot candles or more for regular classroom light with higher intensities for sewing and drafting

or for children with seriously defective vision. There should be adequate intensity, proper diffusion and distribution of light and avoidance of glare."

BOY SEES STARS—Sight Saving Magazine, Nov. 1938 tells this story:

"I don't want to go to bed yet, Mother. I want to stay out and look at the sky. It's so pretty!" Imagine the emotion of a mother on hearing these words from her little boy, who had never before in his life been able to see the stars! It is not often that we are able to trace the effects of our work so directly as in this case, reported to us by a teacher who had received instruction in eye hygiene for children from one of our staff members. Noting that one of her kindergarten children stumbled about awkwardly and was poorly adjusted socially, she believed that his seeming dullness might be the result of poor vision. She urged his parents to have his eyes examined. They complied with her request, and the little boy was fitted with properly prescribed glasses. The teacher was well rewarded for her efforts when the overjoyed mother came to her the day after the child had started to wear the glasses and told her of his pleasure in seeing the stars for the first time.

Compensations for Limitations

When man meets an obstacle or barrier he tries to remove it or go around it. He has bridged rivers, tunneled through mountains, blasted out roadways. He has overcome distance by the telephone, telegraph, cable, radio, and by using trains, automobiles, airplanes. Man has met the deficiencies of vision by the microscope and telescope and by the use of eye-glasses. If he cannot overcome the limitations of some of his powers he accepts them and develops other powers to compensate for the loss. The blind learn to depend more upon touch, hearing, and other sensations. They learn to use their memory and reason. Many illustrations of this have come within our observation or are told by those who have seen such victories.

Blindness is a tragedy with its consciousness of limitations and feeling of dependence on others. It blocks many avenues of oppor-

tunity. The person often feels that the results he has achieved are small in comparison to the effort, perseverance, concentration which they cost. His will and nerve have been taxed by his exertions in making good.

The teacher must endeavor to build up within the blind child inner resources to face his limitations and endeavor to overcome them.

The person who cannot use his eyes leans more heavily on the senses of hearing and touch. He learns to interpret the sensations coming to his ears to a fuller extent. He may be able to tell what kind of an automobile truck is approaching and from what direction by listening and comprehending. His hearing is no better than that of his seeing friends but he has learned to differentiate.

The fingers of the person able to read Braille are no more sensitive than the fingers of his seeing friends, but he has learned to interpret the touch sensations.

Many of the blind have developed their "sense of obstacles" more fully than their seeing friends. Some are extraordinary. Most have it to a serviceable extent. They have trained it, use it, depend upon it when walking abroad. Those who began in their youth develop it better than those who become blind in middle life.

A blind man with a well trained "sense of obstacles" will not collide with a tree or lamp post. He senses the obstruction several feet away. He can tell the difference between a solid wall at his side and an open gateway. He is relying on this faculty and also on his hearing. He notes the reasonance of his footfalls, the coming and going of traffic noises and makes his deductions. On walks he has taken before he is aided by his memory. He detects the pressure of objects through hearing and through feeling the vibrations or pressure of air on his face.

The Chicago Sun, March 22, 1942, tells of a seventy-year-old man blind for fifty years who "sees" with his ears. The article says that he can do almost anything any man can do. He makes cedar chests and is expert in mechanical repairs. He built his own four room house. The Los Angeles Times, March 5, 1933, had



photographs of a stone and stucco house built entirely by a blind man. The Reader's Digest has had a number of articles concerning the ways in which handicapped persons have overcome their handicaps. This and other cases are mentioned in recent numbers: Helen Keller on a drive to Long Island could tell her friends that they were passing through open fields, or a small grove of trees, or passing a house with an open fire, or passing a printing house. She also said that most people exhale an odor, that little children exhale a perfume, that she could recognize her friends instantly by their odors even if many years should elapse.

Social Adjustment and the Development of a Wholesome Personality

The early training of children is one of the most important problems. If children form bad habits they may be broken only by strenuous effort or they may remain to handicap the child through life. The child must learn to take life as he finds it and accept the reversals, and the responsibilities as well as the privileges and pleasures of life. As a child he must develop the attitude of mind required to cope with the broader, later experiences of life.

Kimball Young states, "The blind miss the visual world around them, therefore movement in space is more difficult for them. But they are not cut off from auditory communication with their fellows. The visual world has to be translated for the blind into visual imagery, or into other sense imagery by feeling. Because movement in space is restricted, the blind usually have a dependence upon others when walking and may develop a sense of isolation and inadequacy. The blind also have to face much over-solicitude from others. They may develop self-pity or remain immature and dependent. Others may resist and become aggressive. In a healthy-minded environment the blind child grows up to take his place in the group and community in as normal a fashion as his handicap permits. The blind, as normal children do, resent being considered inferior or being treated as young

children. They need social intercourse with friends to make them grow and to feel in active touch with the world."

Vocational Training and Placement

Paul V. McNutt says: "Men and women today must not be disqualified because of their disabilities; they must be qualified because of their abilities." The handicapped ask no special favors. They should be judged and placed on the basis of skill and ability as for any other applicant. "By their skills ye shall know them." It is not what is gone, but what is left that counts.

The near-sighted can not be aviators but they can be accountants, mechanics or make a success in any number of vocations. Out of 233,600 men who were found to be blind in one or both eyes at the 1940 census, 117,900 needed only selective placement in vocational work, 76,100 needed rehabilitation before placement and 39,600 needed placement in a sheltered workshop.

All jobs are jobs for persons with handicaps. Almost every line of work has been successfully pursued by handicapped persons. Unmistakable evidence has been supplied to the Federal Government that they can be efficient. Placing the Right Man on the Right Job in the Right Place will win the war.

In a New Jersey factory blind girls are sorting mica films better than it can be done by sighted persons. They earn about fifty dollars per week. They sort mica plates one and one-eighth inches square into six different thicknesses, ranging from .0015 to .0045 inches thick.

Selective Placement needs counseling service, guidance and thorough study of the applicant. The job selected should be one for which he is best fitted by ability, training, personality and interest. Medical and social factors must be considered.

The Schools' Responsibility in Vocational Training

The years the handicapped child spends in the classroom should at least furnish the foundation upon which he can build specific occupational training. They must give to him a basis for making a wise occupational choice through self-analysis. In some

cases the schools should furnish the actual vocational preparation which shall equip him for wage-earning responsibilities. It would be folly to suppose that the schools alone can solve the problem of the vocational adjustment of handicapped persons. There are other agencies which must share the responsibility with the school or must take it up where the school lays it down.

The education of the physically handicapped should not be narrowed to vocational training. No uniform rule can be applied to the treatment of all cases. In some states, the older day school pupils are sent to the State School for the Blind for vocational training.

For some the training will be purely avocational. Some can train along with the normal pupils. After a wise choice, success is wholly a question of individual personality.

Dr. R. S. French in his work as Superintendent of the California School for the Blind writes as follows:

"Education unrelated to vocation is not true education. Education which fails to correlate with the great social and moral ends of actual life is worse than no education. Education broken up into unrelated fragments defeats its own ends. The greatest need in the education of the blind is the close correlation of subject with subject and of the whole with life, while considering the special fitness of each and respecting the personality of each and all. Complete living involves making a living, but even vocational training is vain unless complete living means social and objective adjustment and certain ideal values that are not of the material world. True education means for the blind, as for all of us, progressive adjustment to the realities both of the world we know and of that world of as yet unattained ideals, call it what we may."

Success

Success is not easily defined. Various types and degrees of success are possible. A physically handicapped person is usually considered successful when he has become financially independent. After he has achieved this goal he should strive to attain the outstanding success which is the goal for physically normal per-



sons. Thomas A. Edison defined success as being "ninety-nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration."

Personality

Personality is that invisible thing that we cannot define. The real things of life by some method move out from one personality to the other personalities around without anyone knowing how or why it came about. The personality of the teacher moves out to the pupil. A good personality is the result of struggle and growth and is ever a successful process of adjustment. Social contacts polish off the rough edges of personality. A socially adjusted person, without doubt, possesses a high degree of mental health.

The criterion of a healthy mind is mental honesty or the ability to face and accept the unpleasant as well as the pleasant realities of the world in which we live. We are at first egoistic. We have an interest in self and in self-preservation. This normally develops into altruism or interest in others and in their welfare. We find genuine joy and lasting happiness only in what we do that is of value to others. Social approbation and the personal satisfaction which follows achievement are necessary to mental health and the development of character.

The schools must endeavor to develop stronger and more intelligent personality. They can do this through counseling and guidance, through teaching and example. We must lead pupils to discover their own special aptitudes and to develop those which promise the greatest life returns consistent with social welfare. Each should develop according to his own inclinations and the possibilities of his own nature.

The child is a creative being. We must help release his creative energies through literature, arts and crafts including modeling, weaving, woodwork, music, both vocal and instrumental, rhythms, drama, play, etc. He must be inspired to exert himself from the very depths of his soul. He will then express his own emotion. He will "mount up on wings." He may reveal his thoughts and emotions through fine prose or poetry.



The teacher must guide the child into appreciation of the best in literature, art, music, drama, and human relationship. The improvement of our own social life depends upon training in cooperativeness. Each is his brother's keeper. Handicapped children must also strive for the common welfare.

We must help these children to lay hold on eternal realities, the deathless values of mind and spirit, of truth, beauty, goodness. We must emphasize the things that hold humanity together. These realities are the source of poetry, art, scientific and spiritual truth. The spiritual perception sees a great loving will and intelligence behind a friendly universe in which each has his place of labor and rest. Such a person has risen from the notion that the world owes him a living into the conviction that he owes the world a life.

Blind Overcomers

The principal factor in the success of a physically handicapped person, both in an economic way and socially is the drive, the will to surmount, the unconquerable spirit.

There are many pupils and former pupils of the Los Angeles City School for the Blind and the Partially Seeing who are overcoming and have overcome to a great extent their handicaps. Many are successful in an economic way, many are an influence for social betterment and uplift, many are devoting themselves to a life of service for our nation in its time of need, as workers in defense, for the Red Cross, in the ministry and in other avenues of altruistic endeavor.

Human endeavor has its spiritual side and all human endeavor relates itself to the spirit of the individual. There is a real compensation always to those who strive to assist their fellow men. A place in the human scheme of things is essential to human happiness. Edgar E. Allen says: "We cannot achieve as doubters; we cannot contribute as skeptics; we cannot create as cynics." We must have faith and hope and feel that all around us is a universe of intelligence and love. Life is important and we must have a



deep conviction that our work well done becomes a part of the great eternal purpose.

A long list of illustrious overcomers who were blind could be enrolled. Some have already been named in this pamphlet: Louis Braille, William Moon, Laura Bridgeman, and others. We now make special mention of five who had unconquerable spirit, who uplifted their fellow men and the generations that followed by their creative work in the field of spiritual inspiration. These five are Homer, Milton, Handel, Fanny Crosby and Helen Keller.

Homer—Homer's name is one of the oldest and greatest in all literary history. He is the author of two of the world's supreme epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The Greeks did not question his real existence. To them he stood as a gigantic figure, blind but powerful, shrouded in the mists of the past. They agreed that he was blind, that he was very poor, that he wandered from town to town chanting to the music of his lyre those immortal epics. Some say he lived as early as the twelfth century B.C., others that he lived in the seventh century B.C. Quotations from Homer are common in English literature. To him we owe much of our knowledge of the early Greeks.

John Milton, 1608-1674, was author of one of the world's greatest epics, *Paradise Lost*. At the age of twelve he entered Saint Paul's School where he studied Latin, Greek, French, Italian and Hebrew. In 1625 he went to Cambridge. Later he identified himself with the Puritan party. He had a high admiration for Cromwell. Milton married in 1643 and had three daughters. His eyesight had been failing for several years and he became entirely blind in 1652. Then he retired from public life and devoted himself to the composition of the great epic, *Paradise Lost*, he long had planned. It is marked by peerless majesty and sublimity. It was published in 1667. After he became blind he felt that the greater spiritual vision he had received had more than recompensed him. He said, "The light is not so much lost as turned inward for the sharpening of the mind's edge."

George Frederick Handel, 1685-1759, is the composer best known as the creator of the immortal oratorio, *The Messiah*. His

father was determined that he should study law but he was equally determined to devote himself to music. He practiced on the clavichord secretly. Finally the father yielded and at the age of twelve Handel made his debut as a performer at the court of Berlin. Later he studied in Italy, then he went to England where he became a naturalized citizen. He was appointed head of the Royal Academy of Music and wrote his many English oratorios. The Messiah was given in 1741. In 1752 Handel's eyesight began to fail and he became totally blind. However he continued to accompany his oratorios at the organ and played the organ for his "Messiah" performance only eight days before his death, April 14, 1759.

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915), the blind hymn writer whose songs have solaced millions of people, was born in New York State. When only six weeks old she lost her sight through the application of too hot a poultice to her eyes. At the age of fifteen she entered the New York Institution for the Blind where she was a pupil for twelve years. Her teachers noticed her wonderful gift for writing poetry and frequently selected her to address distinguished guests. These addresses were always in verse. In 1847 she became a teacher in the same school. In 1858 she married Alexander Van Alstyne, a blind musician, then a student in the school. In 1864 she began writing hymns. At her death in 1915, aged 95 years, over six thousand hymns bore her signature. Her favorite song was "Safe in the Arms of Jesus." Other well known songs are "Pass Me Not," "Blessed Assurance," "Rescue the Perishing," and many others. The chorus of "Close to Thee" typifies the faith of her whole life:

Close to Thee, close to Thee;
All along my pilgrim journey,
Savior, let me walk with Thee."

Helen Keller was born in 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama. At the age of nineteen months she had a serious illness which left her deaf and blind and because she could not hear she became

mute also. Anne Sullivan Macy went to Helen's home in Alabama to help her. Helen was then six and a half years old. Miss Sullivan began to spell into Helen's hand the names of Helen's playthings and articles she used. Finally Helen realized that everything had a name and that finger spelling was a way to get the things she needed and desired. Her progress was very rapid. She learned to read, write, typewrite. Then she started to learn to speak. She found other people did not talk with their hands. They talked with their mouths. She wanted to do this too. Through placing her hands on Miss Sullivan's throat, lips, nose she learned to say the words Miss Sullivan was saying. She learned letter by letter, syllable by syllable.

When Helen went to college, Miss Sullivan sat beside her and spelled into her hands what the professors said. Helen had to carry all this in her memory until she got home and could put it down on her Braille typewriter. She developed a marvelous memory. She graduated with honors from Radcliffe College and Harvard University.

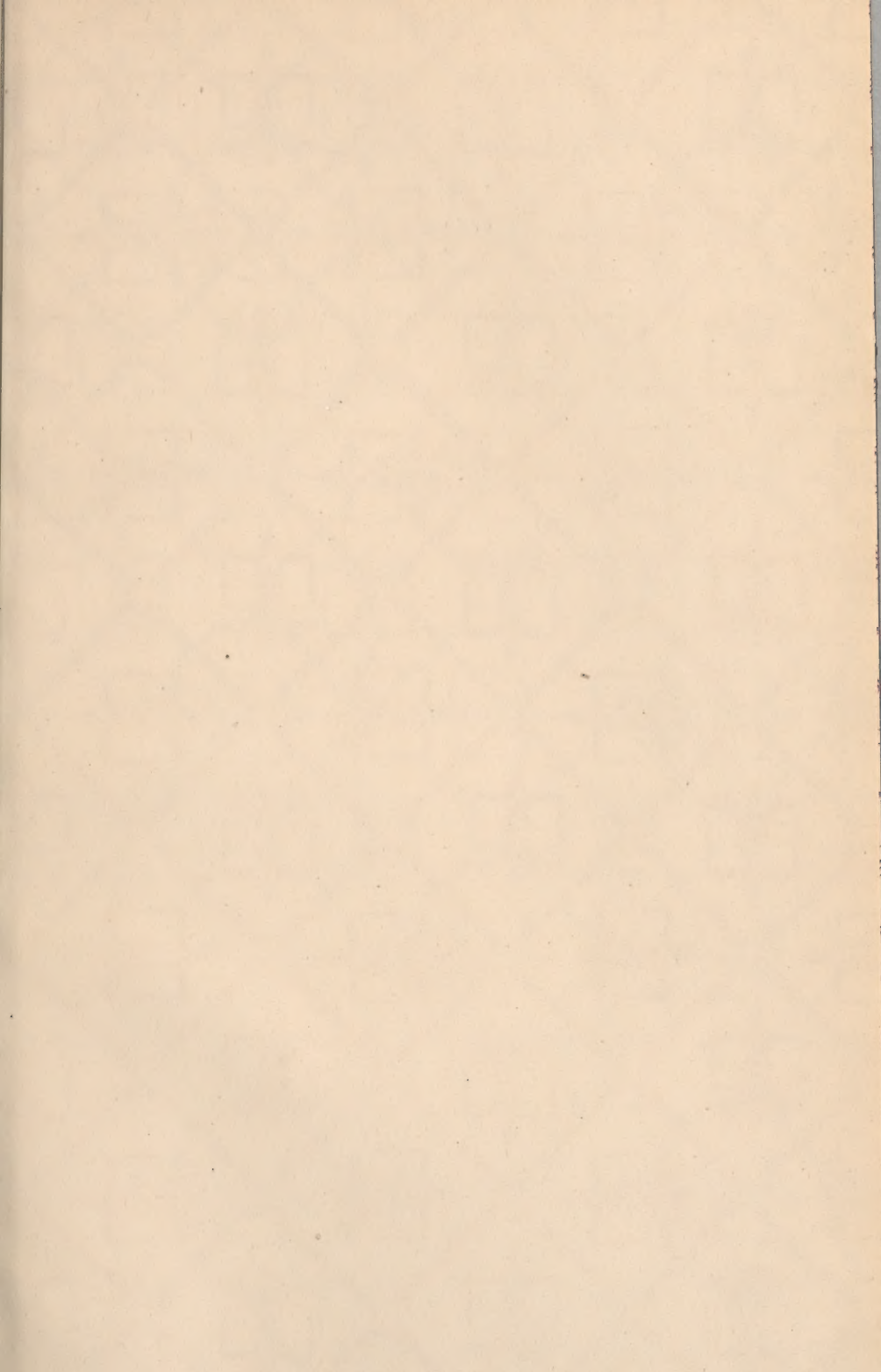
Helen was granted Honorary Life Membership in the National Education Association February 28, 1938, with the Key symbolizing such membership. March 3rd, 1938, was the fiftieth anniversary of the day Anne Sullivan Macy came to teach her and to devote her own life to this one pupil. Helen Keller has long been an outstanding figure and her courageous achievement has been an inspiration to other blind persons throughout the world. She says, "Be a friend to those who will never see the light of day. Be good to them always. When you feel inclined to utter complaints, remember how the blind accept darkness and courage. Learn from them the secret of cheer. Make easier the cruel road of denial they must travel. Remove the thorns that bruise their feet. Then you will put a sweetness into life that was not there before. There is no lovelier way to thank God for your sight than by giving a helping hand to someone in the dark."

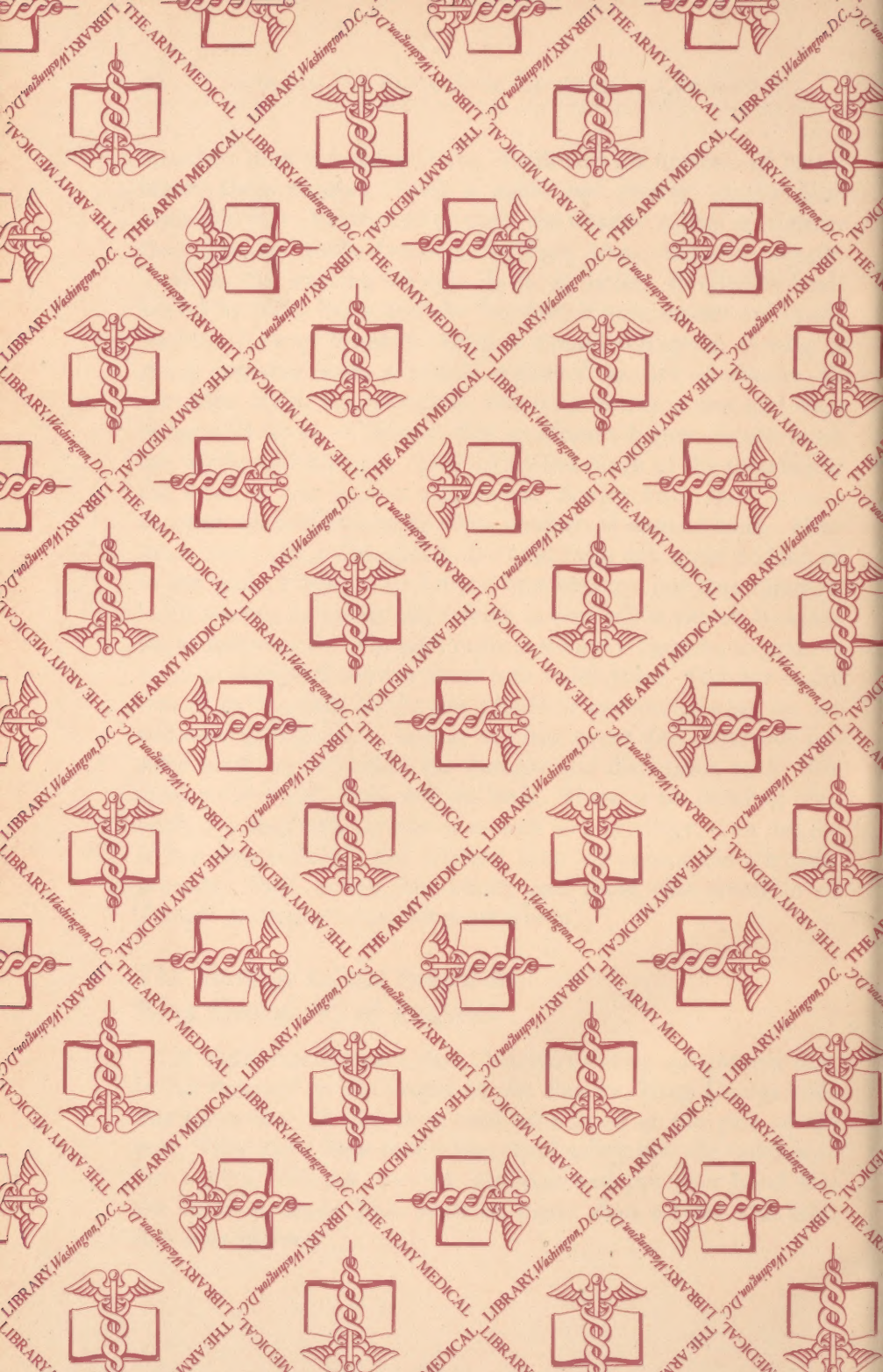
In her book, "Let us have Faith" (1940) she says: "However dark the world may seem we have a light at our command. It is faith. Faith is thought directed toward good. Faith is the

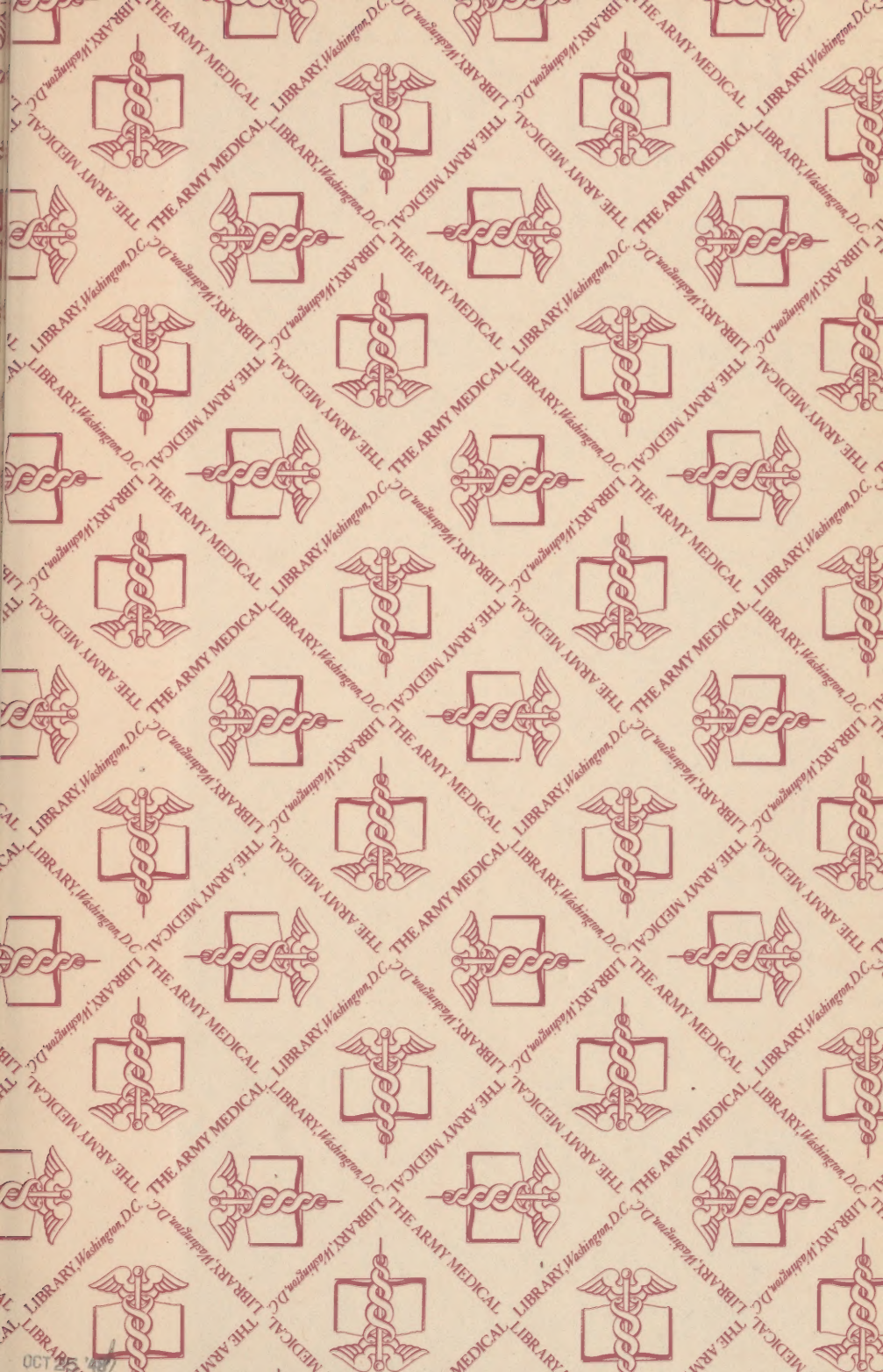
strongest motive force we have. Faith and the universe of heroic minds abide forever. Faith is active not passive. Active faith knows no fear. Reinforced by faith, the weakest mortal is mightier than disaster. Faith directs to the light when darkness prevails. Faith is my working energy. It is no jailer. It releases souls bound by fear. Faith and the freedom it reincarnates are insubduable. It never despairs. Faith is mental perception of what is good, together with a steady endeavor to live it despite all obstacles. Faith has eyes to see that what is true is true and what is good is good. I believe that mankind's higher nature is on the whole still dormant. Most of us live much of the time below the level of our highest aspirations. Simple faith spurs science to open up one immensity after another of natural truth. How much more can a thoughtful all-round faith win great dominions in the soul of man! Our loftiest moments are our true measure. Faith teaches us to use our talents to the fullest extent, however slight they may be. Through faith, mankind is learning to grapple its calamities and convert them into redemption. Our joy is too limited to squander on the low planes of mediocrity when we are endowed sufficiently to stay at our best every day. Everyone has some ideal toward which his thought and disposition tend. We must go forward or we will go back. There is no standing still. Faith is a responsibility for us as well as a privilege. Our destiny is our responsibility, and without faith we cannot meet it competently. Faith makes life whole, and those who dwell in its Temple are happy because they are whole.

The Message to His People by King George VI of England

It was Great Britain's first Christmas during our present war. In his message to the people of the Empire, King George used this quotation: "I said to a man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' He replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be better than a light and safer than a known way'."







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